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APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING
February 10, 2016

TESTIMONY OF

CONNECTICUT FLAGSHIP PRODUCING THEATRES (CFPT)

On behalf of the Connecticut Flagship Producing Theatres which include Goodspeed Musicals, Hartford Stage, Long Wharf Theatre, the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center, Westport County Playhouse and Yale Repertory Theatre, we want to start by saying thank you to the Appropriations Committee and your colleagues in the legislature who continue to recognize and support us. We have come here today to ask that you will consider restoring our appropriation, which was eliminated in the Governor's proposed budget.

Unlike many of the Performing Arts Centers which you may be familiar, the Flagship Producing Theatres, each of which is a non-profit organization, create theater from scratch, right here in Connecticut, annually infusing the state with \$42 million in economic activity.

Collectively:

- We create more than 1,488 jobs for artists and administrators right here in Connecticut
- We spend just under \$24 million in taxable payrolls
- We purchase local materials in excess of \$12.4 million
- We spend nearly \$2.3 million on local printing and advertising and over \$1.3 million on hotel nights and apartment rentals for guest artist housing
- We attract nearly 328,000 regular patrons
- The return on the State's investment is consistently over 400%

In a recent economic impact study conducted by the Americans for the Arts, the direct economic impact of all the arts in Connecticut in 2010 was \$455 million. Approximately 10% of that total spending comes from our six flagship producing theatres, which serve residents from all over the state and attract thousands of patrons from outside of the state.

Beyond our *economic* impact we also have an essential *community* impact. Each of our organizations has partnerships with schools and local organizations, offering a vast array of programs ranging from student matinees to library discussions on inclusivity to training teachers and young theatre professionals. Collectively, **we serve over 40,000 students of all ages throughout the State.** Our impact can be exemplified through the words of Jon T. Romeo, Principal at McDonough School in Middletown:

With more than 4 of every 5 students at Macdonough School eligible for free or reduced priced meals, our children don't often get the chance to experience opportunities like the Goodspeed Opera House. We do all we can to make it a priority to broaden the background knowledge of our students and without programs like the Arts Education Collaborative, it would be virtually impossible.